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ABSTRACT

During the fall of 1998, Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) surveyed 30 employers of its 1995-96 graduates to evaluate the occupational success of its students and the effectiveness of the college's academic programs in preparing graduates for work in various professions. Results include: (1) employers rated the job performance of the graduates very highly, with more than 70% rating them as "excellent" or "good" in every job performance category (technical job skills, quality of work, quantity of work, attitude toward work, cooperation with fellow workers, and cooperation with supervisors); (2) "poor" ratings were only given in the categories of quantity of work, cooperation with fellow workers, and cooperation with supervisors, and these ratings were given by fewer than 10% of the participating employers; (3) compared with the average ratings of the previous five graduating classes, ratings for technical job skills improved by 11%, quality of work went up 7%, and quantity of work increased 9%; (4) employers were less pleased with 1995-96 PVCC graduates' attitudes toward work and with the level of cooperation between graduates and their peers and supervisors; (5) more than 60% of employers rated the graduates as either "excellent" or "good" in every general skills category (math, writing, speaking, research, and logic); and (6) occupational education and training at PVCC was rated as "excellent" or "good" by 92% of the employers. Contains 17 tables. Appended are: Evaluations by Curriculum, Sample Employer Comments, Job Titles of PVCC Graduates, Participating Employers list, and the survey instrument. (EMH)

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Research Report No. 3-2001
June 2001

Piedmont Virginia Community College
Charlottesville, Virginia

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Introduction

This report is the 12th in a series of annual studies on employer satisfaction with Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) graduates.[1] For many students, the primary purposes of a college education are to obtain a particular job and to attain success in that job. Many academic programs are designed to secure jobs for students in technical fields or to upgrade occupational skills. Graduate follow-up surveys, skill tests, and a number of other tools are available for measurement purposes, but ultimately an employer's satisfaction or dissatisfaction determines occupational success for both the graduate and the academic program. At a time when state legislatures, accrediting agencies, and state coordinating boards are demanding student outcome assessment, employer evaluations are extremely important for all institutions of higher education.

Methodology

During the Fall of 1998, the Office of Institutional Research mailed surveys to 45 employers of 1995-96 PVCC graduates. Thirty employers completed and returned valid surveys for a response rate of 66.7%. This response rate was higher than the response rate for the 1994-95 survey (62.9%), but was lower than the rates for the 1993-94 (72.9%) and 1992-93 (80.5%) surveys.

In order to protect the privacy rights of graduates, surveys were mailed

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1 Employer surveys have been conducted on an annual basis since 1987 (see Ronald B. Head, *Employer Survey Results for the PVCC Graduating Class of 1984-1985*, PVCC Research Report No. 5-87, June 1987). The most recent survey was published in 1997 (see Khan M. Hassan and William H. Payne Jr., *Employer Survey Results for the PVCC Graduating Class of 1994-95*, PVCC Research Report No. 6-97, December 1997).

only to employers of graduates who had given permission on a graduate follow-up survey to conduct an employer survey. For example, on the graduate follow-up survey for the class of 1995-96, 47 graduates, or 50.0% of all respondents, answered yes to the question, "May we contact your employer to conduct an employer follow-up survey?" On October 28, 1997, survey forms were sent to the employers of 45 of these graduates. Surveys were not sent to employers of two graduates who were either self-employed or provided no employer address.

Although this limits the number of employers who can be contacted, as well as raises the possibility of a self-selection bias, the privacy rights of PVCC graduates must be ensured. In numerous prior studies, this concern was addressed by calculating correlation coefficients between each of the job performance categories contained in Table 1 and the job satisfaction of PVCC graduates.[2] For the most part, these studies found neither statistically significant positive or negative correlation between job satisfaction and employer evaluations. Specifically, none of the coefficients were significant at the .05 level in any of the studies. While these results suggest little relationship between job satisfaction and employer evaluations of PVCC graduates, care should be exercised in interpreting these results. Employer ratings of PVCC graduate job skills, performance, and attitudes tend to be high regardless of the level of graduate job satisfaction. Therefore, the relatively low level of correlation observed in prior studies may stem more from a general lack of variation in the employer ratings, than from a lack of relationship between the independent and

[2] See Khan M. Hassan and William H. Payne Jr., *Employer Survey Results for the PVCC Graduating Class of 1994-95,* PVCC Research Report No. 6-97, December 1997.

dependent variables.

Results of the employer survey by PVCC instructional program and degree are included in this study as Appendix A. Sample employer comments are included as Appendix B. A list of the job titles of PVCC graduates whose employers completed surveys is included as Appendix C, and a list of all participating employers is included as Appendix D. The release form is included as Appendix E and the survey instrument as Appendix F.

Of the 29 graduates whose employers returned valid surveys, 62.1% (18) indicated on the graduate follow-up survey that they intended to pursue their current jobs as long-range careers, 34.5% (10) indicated they did not plan to pursue their current position long-term, and 3.4% (1) were undecided. For the most part, these graduates were more likely to want to pursue their current jobs as long-range careers than were other graduate survey respondents. Nearly 55.4% (41) of all employed graduate survey respondents indicated that they planned to pursue their current positions long-term, while 39.2% (29) indicated they would not, 5.4% (4) were undecided. Over time, the proportion of graduates indicating that they intended to pursue their current positions as long-term careers has fluctuated (65.6% in 1992-93; 51.6% in 1993-94; 72.7% in 1994-95).

Graduates who participated in the employer survey also were more likely than graduates in general to be satisfied with their present jobs. Nearly forty percent of graduates (37.9% or 11) whose employers participated in the employer survey indicated on the graduate follow-up survey that they were very satisfied with their jobs, 48.3% (14) were satisfied, and 13.8% (4) were not very satisfied. In contrast, only 29.7% (22) of all employed graduate survey respon-

dents indicated that they were very satisfied with their jobs, 44.6% (33) indicated they were satisfied, 18.9% (14) were not very satisfied, and 2.7% (2) were dissatisfied. Three graduates surveyed (4.1%) did not respond to this question.

As noted earlier, surveying employers only with prior permission from PVCC graduates may have biased the survey results. One might assume that satisfied, productive workers are more likely than unsatisfied, unproductive workers to allow their employers to be contacted. Indeed, 1995-96 graduate survey data suggest that graduates who granted PVCC permission to contact their employers had higher levels of job satisfaction than did survey respondents in general. While 74.3% of all employed graduate respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs, 83.0% of the graduates who allowed PVCC to contact their employers were satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs. The possibility that results of the survey were biased by the selection procedure is a valid concern.

Evaluation of Job Performance

For the most part, employers were pleased with the job skills, work performance, and attitudes of the 1995-96 PVCC graduates they hired. As can be seen in Table 1, over three-fourths of employers rated PVCC graduates as either "Excellent" (one of the best ever) or "Good" (better than most) in every job performance category.

Employers were very pleased with the technical job skills and quality of work of PVCC graduates, and with the relationship between those graduates and their supervisors. These categories received the largest proportion of "Excellent" and "Good" ratings. Nearly 90% of employers rated the "Technical Job Skills"

(89.7%), "Quality of Work" (89.6%), and "Cooperation with Supervisors" (89.6%),of PVCC graduates as either "Excellent" or "Good".

Table 1: Evaluation of Job Performance

Category	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Technical Job Skills	10	34.5%	16	55.1%	3	10.3%	0	0%
Quality of Work	15	51.7%	11	37.9%	3	10.3%	0	0%
Quantity of Work	12	41.4%	13	44.8%	3	10.3%	1	3.4%
Attitude Toward Work	13	44.8%	9	31%	7	24.1%	0	0%
Cooperation with Fellow Workers	13	44.8%	11	37.9%	3	10.3%	2	6.9%
Cooperation with Supervisors	13	44.8%	13	44.8%	2	6.9%	1	3.4%

Employers were pleased to a lesser degree with graduate attitudes toward work, and with the level of cooperation between graduates and their peers. As revealed in Table 1, about a fourth of employers rated 1995-96 PVCC graduates as "Average" in the category "Attitude Toward Work," and nearly 7% of employers rated the graduates as "Poor" in the category "Cooperation with Fellow Workers."

In order to place these figures in perspective, this study compares composite employer ratings for 1995-96 graduates with an average of the ratings for the previous five graduating classes. Composite ratings indicate the proportion of employers who rated PVCC graduates as either "Excellent" or "Good" in a given job-performance or general-skill category. By comparing the composite ratings of recent graduates with those of their predecessors, researchers are able to determine whether the evaluations of 1995-96 PVCC

graduates are above, below, or about the same as the average.

Comparative ratings indicate that employers were exceptionally pleased with the technical job skills, the quality of work, and the quantity of work of 1995-96 PVCC graduates. As can be seen in Table 2, employer ratings of 1995-96 graduate "Technical Job Skills" (+11.9%), "Quantity of Work" (+9.7%), and "Quality of Work" (+9.4%) were well above the average ratings for the previous five graduating classes.

Table 2: Job Performance Rating Comparison

Category	1995-96 Ratings	5-Year Average	Difference
Technical Job Skills	89.7%	77.8%	11.9%
Quality of Work	89.6%	80.2%	9.4%
Quantity of Work	86.2%	76.5%	9.7%
Attitude Toward Work	75.8%	86.5%	-10.7%
Cooperation with Fellow Workers	82.7%	86.1%	-3.4%
Cooperation with Supervisors	89.6%	91.1%	-1.5%

Employer ratings of 1995-96 graduate's cooperation with peers and cooperation with supervisors are consistent with those of prior studies. Ratings of 1995-96 graduates were close to the average in two job performance categories: "Cooperation with Fellow Workers" (-3.4%), and "Cooperation with Supervisors" (-1.5%). Finally, employers were somewhat less pleased with the work attitudes of 1995-96 graduates than with those of their predecessors, as indicated by a composite rating that is well below the five-year average (-10.7%).

Evaluation of General Skills

In addition to job performance, employers were asked to evaluate the

general skills of PVCC graduates. General skill categories include math, writing, speaking, research, and logic.

Overall, employers felt that 1995-96 graduates had better general skills than most of their employees. As can be seen in Table 3, over 60% of employers rated PVCC graduates as either "Excellent" or "Good" in every skill category. Less than 10% of graduates were rated by their employers as "Poor" in any of these skills.

Table 3: Evaluation of General Skills

	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
Category	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Math Skills	6	24.0%	12	48.0%	7	28.0%	0	0.0%
Writing SKills	8	30.8%	8	30.8%	9	34.6%	1	3.8%
Speaking Skills	8	29.6%	11	40.7%	7	25.9%	1	3.7%
Research Skills	7	30.4%	9	39.1%	5	21.7%	2	8.7%
Logic Skills	11	40.7%	11	40.7%	3	11.1%	2	7.4%

As can be seen in Table 4, composite employer ratings of 1995-96 PVCC graduates were well above average in one general skill category (Logic +13.0%), were close to average in three categories (Math –4.1%; Speaking –1.2%; Research +3.5%), and were below average in one category (Writing –5.8%). These figures indicate that employers were more pleased with the logic skills of the 1995-96 graduates they hired, and somewhat less pleased with the writing skills of 1995-96 graduates than with their predecessors.

Table 4: General Skill Rating Comparison

Category	1995-96 Ratings	5-Year Average	Difference
Math	72.0%	76.1%	-4.1%
Writing	61.6%	67.4%	-5.8%
Speaking	70.3%	71.5%	-1.2%
Research	69.5%	66.0%	3.5%
Logic	81.4%	68.4%	13.0%

Employer evaluations of the job performance and general skills of 1995-96 PVCC graduates by curricular program and degree are presented in Tables 5 through 15 of Appendix A. As noted earlier, care should be exercised in interpreting figures from the tables in Appendix A. In many cases, the numbers of respondents are too few for meaningful conclusions to be drawn.

Evaluation of PVCC Education and Training

In addition to asking employers to evaluate the job performance and general skills of PVCC graduates, employers were asked to share their perceptions concerning the quality of a PVCC education. Employers rated PVCC according to two categories: (1) "Occupational Education and Training;" and (2) "General Education."

An overwhelming majority of employers believe that PVCC is better than most institutions with respect to both occupational education and training, and general education. As can be seen in Table 5, occupational education and training at PVCC was rated as "Excellent" or "Good" by 92.0% of employers; and general education was rated as either "Excellent" or "Good" by 84.6% of employers. No employer rated either occupational education and training or

general education as "Poor", and less than a fifth of all employers rated either as "Average".

Table 5: Evaluation of PVCC Education

	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
Category	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Occ. Ed. & Training	5	20.0%	18	72.0%	2	8.0%	0	0.0%
General Education	5	19.2%	17	65.4%	4	15.4%	0	0.0%

Employers of 1995-96 PVCC graduates were pleased more than their predecessors with the quality of education the college provides. As can be seen in Table 6, the 1995-96 ratings are well above average both in terms of Occupational Education (+11.3%) and General Education (+8.4%).

Table 6: PVCC Education Rating Comparison

Category	1995-96 Ratings	5-Year Average	Difference
Occupational Education & Training	92.0%	80.7%	11.3%
General Education	84.6%	76.2%	8.4%

Conclusions

The primary purpose of employer surveys is to determine employer satisfaction, or dissatisfaction, with PVCC graduate job skills, performance, and academic preparation. Such surveys are important because they enable college officials to gauge the success of academic programs. On the whole, employers were satisfied with the job performance and general skills of the 1995-96 PVCC graduates they hired, as well as with the training and education provided by

PVCC.

As in the past, employers gave the job performance of 1995-96 PVCC graduates high ratings. Over three-fourths of employers rated PVCC graduates as either "Excellent" or "Good" in every job performance category. Technical job skills, quality of work, and cooperation with supervisors received the highest ratings, and graduate attitudes toward work and cooperation with fellow workers received the lowest.

Employers were somewhat less pleased with the work attitudes of 1995-96 graduates, as indicated by a composite rating that is well below the five-year average. Composite ratings of graduate attitude toward work have exhibited a precipitous decline. After peaking at 96.0% in 1991-92, employer ratings of graduate attitudes toward work declined for four straight years, reaching a low of 75.8% in 1995-96. Employer evaluations of graduate cooperation with fellow workers and supervisors also declined slightly for the third straight year.

These figures suggest that 1995-96 PVCC graduates were less able to manage the relational and attitudinal aspects of their respective work environments than were their predecessors; however, care should be exercised in interpreting these results, due to the small number of employer survey respondents.

Overall employers felt that PVCC graduates had better general skills than most of their employees. Over 60% of employers surveyed rated 1995-96 graduates as either "Excellent" or "Good" in every general skill category. Among those categories, logic skills received the highest composite rating (81.4%) and writing skills received the lowest (61.6%).

Composite employer ratings of PVCC graduate logic skills have exhibited a marked increase since the early 1990s, culminating in a rating for 1995-96 graduates that was well above the average for the previous five graduating classes (+13.0%). Conversely, evaluations of PVCC graduate "Writing" and "Speaking" skills have declined over time. Although graduate speaking skills rebounded from a period low, graduate writing skills reached a six-year low in 1995-96 (61.6%), or nearly six percentage points below average (-5.8%).

Finally, employers of 1995-96 graduates were very satisfied with the quality of education and training provided by PVCC. An overwhelming majority of employers believe that PVCC is better than most institutions with respect to both occupational education and training (92.0%) and general education (84.6%). Compared to evaluations of prior surveys, the 1995-96 ratings were well above average both in terms of occupational education (+11.3%) and general education (+8.4%).

The level of employer satisfaction with PVCC academic programs has increased over time. Between 1991-92 and 1995-96, employer ratings both of occupational education and training, and of general education, have risen from respective lows (76.2% and 68.2%), to new respective highs (92.0% and 84.6%). The feeling many employers have concerning the college is well expressed by the following comment which appeared on one of the surveys: "Your graduates are well prepared and adapt well to our work setting. Wish I could have them all. Congratulations."

Appendix A: Evaluations by Curriculum

Table 7: Evaluation of Technical Job Skills by Curriculum

Program/Degree	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Business Admin.	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Education	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
General Studies	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Science	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AS Degree	3	37.5%	5	62.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Nursing	4	36.4%	5	45.5%	2	18.2%	0	0.0%
Management	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Computer Info. Sys.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Police Science	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Electronics	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AAS Degree	7	36.8%	9	47.4%	3	15.8%	0	0.0%
Career Studies	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Law Enforcement	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Certificate	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	10	34.5%	16	55.2%	3	10.3%	0	0.0%

Table 8: Evaluation of Quality of Work by Curriculum

Program/Degree	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Business Admin.	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Education	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
General Studies	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Science	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AS Degree	6	75.0%	2	25.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Nursing	4	36.4%	5	45.5%	2	18.2%	0	0.0%
Management	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Computer Info. Sys.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Police Science	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Electronics	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AAS Degree	8	42.1%	8	42.1%	3	15.8%	0	0.0%
Career Studies	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Law Enforcement	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Certificate	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	15	51.7%	11	37.9%	3	10.3%	0	0.0%

Note: No employers returned completed surveys for 1995-96 graduates who had received AA degrees.

Table 9: Evaluation of Quantity of Work by Curriculum

	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
Program/Degree	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Business Admin.	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Education	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
General Studies	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Science	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AS Degree	4	50.0%	4	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Nursing	4	36.4%	4	36.4%	2	18.2%	1	9.1%
Management	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Computer Info. Sys.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Police Science	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Electronics	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AAS Degree	8	42.1%	7	36.8%	3	15.8%	1	5.3%
Career Studies	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Law Enforcement	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Certificate	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	12	41.4%	13	44.8%	3	10.3%	1	3.4%

Table 10: Evaluation of Work Attitude by Curriculum

	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
Program/Degree	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Business Admin.	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Education	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
General Studies	1	33.3%	1	33.3%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%
Science	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AS Degree	5	62.5%	2	25.0%	1	12.5%	0	0.0%
Nursing	5	45.5%	1	9.1%	5	45.5%	0	0.0%
Management	1	25.0%	2	50.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%
Computer Info. Sys.	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Police Science	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Electronics	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AAS Degree	7	36.8%	6	31.6%	6	31.6%	0	0.0%
Career Studies	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Law Enforcement	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Certificate	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	13	44.8%	9	31.0%	7	24.1%	0	0.0%

Note: No employers returned completed surveys for 1995-96 graduates who had received AA degrees.

Table 11: Evaluation of Cooperation with Co-workers by Curriculum

	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
Program/Degree	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Business Admin.	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Education	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
General Studies	1	33.3%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	1	33.3%
Science	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AS Degree	4	50.0%	3	37.5%	0	0.0%	1	12.5%
Nursing	6	54.5%	2	18.2%	2	18.2%	1	9.1%
Management	1	25.0%	3	75.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Computer Info. Sys.	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Police Science	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Electronics	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
AAS Degree	8	42.1%	7	36.8%	3	15.8%	1	5.3%
Career Studies	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Law Enforcement	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Certificate	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	13	44.8%	11	37.9%	3	10.3%	2	6.9%

Table 12: Evaluation of Cooperation with Supervisors by Curriculum

	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
Program/Degree	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Business Admin.	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Education	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
General Studies	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Science	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AS Degree	3	37.5%	5	62.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Nursing	7	63.6%	2	18.2%	1	9.1%	1	9.1%
Management	1	25.0%	3	75.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Computer Info. Sys.	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Police Science	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Electronics	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
AAS Degree	9	47.4%	7	36.8%	2	10.5%	1	5.3%
Career Studies	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Law Enforcement	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Certificate	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	13	44.8%	13	44.8%	2	6.9%	1	3.4%

Note: No employers returned completed surveys for 1995-96 graduates who had received AA degrees.

Table 13: Evaluation of Math Skills by Curriculum

Program/Degree	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Business Admin.	1	33.3%	1	33.3%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%
Education	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
General Studies	0	0.0%	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AS Degree	1	14.3%	5	71.4%	1	14.3%	0	0.0%
Nursing	3	33.3%	3	33.3%	3	33.3%	0	0.0%
Management	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Computer Info. Sys.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Police Science	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Electronics	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AAS Degree	5	31.3%	6	37.5%	5	31.3%	0	0.0%
Career Studies	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Law Enforcement	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Certificate	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Total	6	24.0%	12	48.0%	7	28.0%	0	0.0%

Table 14: Evaluation of Writing Skills by Curriculum

Program/Degree	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Business Admin.	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%
Education	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
General Studies	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AS Degree	2	28.6%	3	42.9%	2	28.6%	0	0.0%
Nursing	3	30.0%	2	20.0%	5	50.0%	0	0.0%
Management	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Computer Info. Sys.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%
Police Science	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Electronics	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AAS Degree	5	29.4%	5	29.4%	6	35.3%	1	5.9%
Career Studies	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Law Enforcement	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Certificate	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Total	8	30.8%	8	30.8%	9	34.6%	1	3.8%

Note: No employers returned completed surveys for 1995-96 graduates who had received AA degrees.

Table 15: Evaluation of Speaking Skills by Curriculum

Program/Degree	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Business Admin.	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%
Education	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
General Studies	0	0.0%	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%
AS Degree	1	14.3%	3	42.9%	3	42.9%	0	0.0%
Nursing	4	40.0%	3	30.0%	2	20.0%	1	10.0%
Management	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Computer Info. Sys.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Police Science	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Electronics	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AAS Degree	7	38.9%	6	33.3%	4	22.2%	1	5.6%
Career Studies	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Law Enforcement	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Certificate	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	8	29.6%	11	40.7%	7	25.9%	1	3.7%

Table 16: Evaluation of Research Skills by Curriculum

Program/Degree	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Business Admin.	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
Education	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
General Studies	1	33.3%	1	33.3%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%
AS Degree	2	33.3%	2	33.3%	2	33.3%	0	0.0%
Nursing	4	50.0%	1	12.5%	2	25.0%	1	12.5%
Management	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Computer Info. Sys.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%
Police Science	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Electronics	0	0.0%	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%
AAS Degree	5	33.3%	5	33.3%	3	20.0%	2	13.3%
Career Studies	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Law Enforcement	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Certificate	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	7	30.4%	9	39.1%	5	21.7%	2	8.7%

Note: No employers returned completed surveys for 1995-96 graduates who had received AA degrees.

Table 17: Evaluation of Logic Skills by Curriculum

Program/Degree	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Business Admin.	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Education	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
General Studies	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AS Degree	2	33.3%	4	66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Nursing	5	45.5%	2	18.2%	2	18.2%	2	18.2%
Management	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Computer Info. Sys.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%
Police Science	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Electronics	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AAS Degree	8	42.1%	6	31.6%	3	15.8%	2	10.5%
Career Studies	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Law Enforcement	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Certificate	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	11	40.7%	11	40.7%	3	11.1%	2	7.4%

Note: No employers returned completed surveys for 1995-96 graduates who had received AA degrees.

Appendix B: Sample Employer Comments

Sample Employer Comments

"We have hired several students who have worked here through the cooperative program. It makes a world of difference in a new graduate. It is also "Good" to know that the students put out extra effort to further their skills. [PVCC graduate] is exceptional. Her personality of course makes a difference, but she is willing to learn and try new things. She now functions in the capacity of charge nurse."

"[PVCC graduate] was helped enormously by the program."

"As a new R.N. [PVCC graduate] had much difficulty being the charge nurse (e.g., making assignments for her staff [and] monitoring to see if assignments [were] completed). As a Director of Nursing for several years, I have seen a pattern of this with new graduates. She displayed to her staff and verbalized to me her difficulty relating to line staff. With her supervisors she was often difficult to communicate with. This was probably more of a personality trait than a lack of instruction on PVCC's part. She never wanted to research for answers (e.g., check a policy and procedure manual, or look in a PDR) which is an important aspect of nursing. You are not expected to know everything, but if given the resources you need to learn how to use them. While [PVCC graduate] was an extremely bright individual and was able to quote and deal with facts and ideal situations, she frequently displayed problems working through minor problems. After one year of employment and much supervision and verbal assistance, she continued to want to see everything as black or white. This is rarely the case in medicine."

Appendix C: Job Titles of PVCC Graduates

Job Titles

Accountant

CD Replication/Service Technician

Charge Nurse

Computer Lab Assistant

Customer Service Agent

Dispatcher

Equipment Repair Technician

Facility Assignment Officer

Office Assistant/Data Entry Clerk

Office Manager

Police Detective

Program Support Technician

Programmer

Receiving/RTM Clerk

Referral Specialist

Registered Nurse

RN Supervisor

Staff Nurse

Elementary Teacher

Appendix D: Participating Employers

Participating Employer Organizations

Charlottesville Bureau of Credit
Charlottesville Police Department
Columbia Doctors Hospital
Dillwyn Correctional Center
Eldercare Gardens
F & W Forestry Services, Incorporated
Genesis Piedmont Elder Care
Harrisonburg Police Department
Healthsouth Medical Center
Henning Associates
Heritage Hall Nursing Home
Isotemp Research Incorporated
Lowe's
Martha Jefferson Hospital
Mountain View Nursing Home
Pediatric Association
Piedmont Virginia Community College
Qual Choice of Virginia
Sentara Health System
Sono Press
Sprint
Stone-Robinson Elementary
Thomas Jefferson Health District
U.S. Air
University of Virginia
Virginia Department of Transportation

Appendix E: Survey Instrument

Piedmont Virginia Community College

Employer Survey for the Graduating Class of 1995-96

Instructions: Please check the appropriate box for each question. This information will be treated as strictly confidential with answers being combined for group analysis.

1. Compared to other employees you hire in a similar capacity, how does [PVCC Graduate] rate on each of the following job performance and general skill measures?

	"Excellent"	"Good"	"Average"	"Poor"	N/A
Technical job skills	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Quality of work	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Quantity of work	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Attitude toward work	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Cooperation with fellow workers	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Cooperation with supervisors	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Math skills	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Writing skills	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Speaking skills	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Research skills	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Logic skills	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

2. Compared to similar colleges whose graduates you hire, how does PVCC rate in terms of the quality of education and training provided?

	"Excellent"	"Good"	"Average"	"Poor"	N/A
Occupational education & training	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
General education	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

3. Was a degree from PVCC required to obtain this job? Yes ❑ No ❑

4. Was a degree from PVCC required to obtain a job promotion? Yes ❑ No ❑

5. Did you participate in PVCC's cooperative education program? Yes ❑ No ❑

6. If not, are you interested in learning more about the program? Yes ❑ No ❑

7. Please use the reverse side of this survey to make any written comments you think will be helpful to PVCC in evaluating the success of its academic programs and graduates.